

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

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S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 074415

E.O. 11652:XGDS 2 3

TAGS:PFOR,PDIP, US, GV

SUBJECT:DISCUSSIONS WITH GUINEAN AMBASSADOR ON PL-480 AND
SOVIET FLIGHTS

REF: STATE 70299

1. AMBASSADOR KOUROUMA CALLED ON AF/W DIRECTOR MARCH 30
TO INQUIRE ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PL-480 AGREEMENT
FOR 10,000 TONS OF RICE SIGNED SEPTEMBER 22. HE STATED
THAT HE WAS SURPRISED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD RAISED
THE ISSUE OF SOVIET FACILITIES IN CONAKRY DURING HIS
PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS, ;BUT HAD THE IMPRESSION
THAT THE PRESIDENT SAID THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WISHED
TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH GUINEA.

2. KOUROUMA SAID THAT HE HAD EXPLAINED TO THE PRESIDENT
THAT GUINEA HAD ONLY ALLOWED THE SOVIETS TO USE CONAKRY
FOR AIRCRAFT ON THE WAY TO ANGOLA IN KEEPING WITH GUINEA'S
POLICY OF SUPPORTING LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. UNFORTUNATELY
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SAID KOUROUMA THE PLANES WERE SOMEHOW USED AGAINST NATO.
KOUROUMA STATED THAT SOME TIME AFTER THE SEPTEMBER 22
AGREEMENT WHEN US DISPLEASURE REGARDING THE FLIGHTS WAS
CLEAR, THE GOG HAD CONVOKED THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR
TO SAY THAT GUINEA COULD NOT HAVE ITS TERRITORY USED
BY ANOTHER COUNTRY AGAINST A T;IRD COUNTRY. HE ADDED
THAT TOURE AND BEAVOGUI HAD SAID THE SAME TO AMBASSADOR

HARROP. HE STATED THAT IF THE US WISHED TO LAND PLANES

IN CONAKRY IN SUPPORT OF THE "PATRIOTS" IN RHODESIA THAT GUINEA WOULD BE HAPPY TO GIVE TRANSIT AUTHORIZATION.

3. KOUROUMA ALLEGED THAT HE HAD EXPLAINED TO PRESIDENT CARTER THAT GUINEA WAS IN DANGER AND WANTED A SECURITY GUARANTEE FROM THE US GOVERNMENT. HE NOTED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD SENT A BRIEF LETTER TO PRESIDENT TOURE. HE SAID THAT GUINEA WAS NOT CLOSED TO NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT HE HOPED RELATIONS COULD BE IMPROVED. HE WAS PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SEEMED CONFIDENT THAT RELATIONS COULD IMPROVE.

4. WE BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED THE BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT SUSPENSION OF THE AGREEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 22. WE SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS RECEIVING CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND THAT WE WOULD INFORM GUINEA WHEN WE HAD MADE A DECISION REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PL-480 AGREEMENT.

5. KOUROUMA INSISTED THAT GUINEA WAS NOT A PUPPET OF THE SOVIETS AND THAT THERE WERE NO SOVIET "BASES" IN GUINEA. MILITARY COOPERATION WITH THE SOVIETS WAS NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH GUINEAN OBJECTIVES. HE ADDED THAT THE GUINEANS DID NOT HAVE THE TECHNICAL CAPABILITY TO KNOW WHAT THE SOVIET PLANES DID ON THE WAY TO OR FROM GUINEA. HE SAID THAT THE SOVIETS HAD ASSURED CONFIDENTIAL

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GUINEA THAT THE FLIGHTS WERE NOT DIRECTED AGAINST THE US. KOUROUMA CLAIMED THAT THE FLIGHTS GOING BACK TO 1973 WERE ALL DIRECTED IN SUPPORT OF LIBERATION ACTIVITIES IN ANGOLA.

6. WE INQUIRED ABOUT THE GOG NEED FOR RICE. KOUROUMA SAID THAT GUINEA WAS SHORT OF RICE BECAUSE OF BAD WEATHER IN THE SAHEL AREA AND BECAUSE THOSE WORKING ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WERE NOT EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE. HE SAID THAT GUINEA WAS OBLIGED TO BUY RICE USING FOREIGN EXCHANGE THAT COULD BE USED FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

7. KOUROUMA SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD AMBASSADOR HARROP THAT HIGH LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GUINEA AND THE US, EITHER IN CONAKRY OR IN WASHINGTON, MIGHT HELP CLEAR PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE US AND GUINEA. A GUINEAN DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES COULD INCLUDE THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE INTERIOR MINISTER. HE STATED

THAT GUINEA WAS OPEN AS TO THE TIME OR PLACE. HE SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF DISCUSSIONS COULD BE HELD BEFORE THE MAY 14 CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GUINEAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. HE ADDED AS AN AFTER THOUGHT THAT THE PL-480 AGREEMENT FOR 10,000 TONS OF RICE SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE ANY HIGH LEVEL DISCUSSIONS SINCE GUINEA DID NOT WISH TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE THAT ANY SENIOR OFFICIALS WERE DISCUSSING IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT. WE CONCLUDED THAT WE WERE STUDYING THE MATTER AND WOULD GIVE GUINEA AN ANSWER.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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